COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE FOR PROGRAMMING

Key Issues

Lessons Learned

Resources

Over the past couple of years, there has been a lot of discussion focused on preparation and planning for reconstruction and stability operations after conflict. Many organizations, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), are focused on improving operations in post-conflict settings. However, USAID has also argued that the international community should use existing tools to do a better job of reducing the potential for conflict, which USAID now defines to include a wide range of unhealthy trends like terrorism, extremism and insurgency.
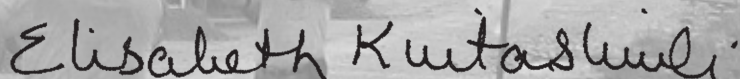
We know that war and violent conflict are expensive and self-perpetuating. Conflict can lead to the displacement of substantial groups of people, loss of assets like land and tools, physical and psychological trauma, fractured societal structures, and chronic economic, social and health problems in the long-term. The host government and/or the international community then bear the costs of responding to these problems and helping to repair the society. In the long run, these costs can lead to entrenched governance problems, decreased GDP and capital flight, setting back a country's development and sowing the seeds for future discontent and a possible return to war.

A key challenge for development practitioners today is to better understand the complexities of conflict, and then to apply that knowledge to improve conflict-laden situations through cross-cutting development programming. As part of an effort of "early response" to mitigate, reduce or even prevent an outbreak of violence or conflict, the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) in USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) has commissioned a series of toolkits and program guides that can be used to program in such as way as to reduce that potential for violent conflict.

Six such toolkits or program guides have already been released in such thematic areas as youth, livelihoods, land, and gender, explaining areas connection to conflict. These documents are designed to move from the diagnosis of a problem area to a more detailed discussion of potential interventions drawing from lessons elsewhere. Their overall aim is to raise awareness among USAID mission employees of the links between various thematic issues and conflict, and to assist USAID program development by integrating conflict prevention, mitigation and management.

As Director of DCHA/CMM, I am pleased to introduce this latest document on Community Based Development in Conflict Affected-Areas. This guide identifies the key issues and lessons learned for using this method of programming in conflict affected areas. As always, DCHA/CMM documents are "living documents" and we welcome your comments and observations to help us improve future iterations.

Elisabeth Kvitashvili

Elisabeth Kvitashvili
Director
Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation
Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS: AN INTRODUCTION

Since its inception, USAID has supported countries undergoing transitions from war to peace and the number of countries and the extent of the assistance have increased since the end of the Cold War. In a post-conflict environment, elites jostle with one another to put their own stamp on the post-conflict polity and economy while everyone else focuses on trying to ensure their own security and restore their livelihoods in these uncertain times. In other words, post-conflict transitions lack the conditions of stability and certainty necessary to initiate sustainable development. Yet these same unsettled conditions provide rare opportunities to reconstitute a society—if donors can engage with local partners to take advantage of the opportunities as they arise through a community-driven process, which is the focus of this document.

Rehabilitating conflict-torn countries to avoid a return to conflict remains tough. As hostilities come to an end and in their immediate aftermath, the goal in any post-conflict environment is to stabilize the situation. Specifically this means: (1) attending to humanitarian needs, including resettlement of refugees and internally displaced people; (2) restoring food security and livelihoods; (3) improving local security, including demobilization and resettlement, human rights protection and reducing violent conflict; (4) restarting national and local economic activity; and (5) restoring basic institutions of economic and democratic governance. Community-based decision-making is a critical intervention that can help donors and implementing partners see more clearly how to address the many attendant problems. In particular, one should remember, ownership of the recovery process comes from local decision making over every aspect; a critical point of departure for empowerment/ownership seems to be community access to funds (instead of NGO control). This requires serious capacity building that goes beyond the standard training to include mentoring. Checks and balances to ensure decisions are representative are important and close monitoring of the process, not just outcome, is essential. Economic recovery should be focused on human security and on building resilience in communities. This means that most service-oriented programs, which is what donors/ NGOs/contractors often have to offer, are generally not what communities need most in the short term (security) or in the long term (the ability to resist further oppression and to take the future in their hands).

While the previous points focus on post-conflict recovery, community-based development as a methodology can and should be used in any phase of conflict (pre-, during, or post-). This approach focuses on listening to local needs and desires and attempts to incorporate goals and objectives as identified by local communities.

KEY ISSUES

Community-Based Development (CBD) programming has re-emerged as a preferred programming option after two decades in which development and humanitarian assistance has been increasingly targeted towards conflict-affected areas. Programming ranges from rehabilitating infrastructure to generating short-term employment and providing social services. CBD programs focus on local actors – specifically small communities – with the hope of addressing the root sources of conflict, supporting livelihoods, and building local capacity to solve problems in an inclusive and non-violent manner.

Many donors and aid implementing partners work at the local level to empower communities. Recent programs have explicitly focused on the potential of community-based approaches to build participatory and inclusive decision-making structures, to change social dynamics, to kick start economic activity, and to rebuild frayed social ties, thus mitigating chances of future conflict. Adopting these approaches assumes that some of the roots of conflict are local.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has a history of supporting programs that use a participatory approach as a tool for social reconciliation and integration of ex-combatants and other conflict-affected populations, mainly in post-conflict settings. USAID has implemented these programs in all regions of the world, from earlier programs in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and the Philippines to more recent endeavors in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Iraq.

Local empowerment and ownership represents a new trend for many communities, where existing decision-making structures may not place the same emphasis on consensus-building and inclusion that community-based approaches do. There may be significant resistance from local elites that benefit from existing arrangements. Conflict, especially protracted violent conflict, creates complex relationships in communities as alliances shift over time. In affected communities, individuals who have injured or been injured by others often have to come together to access program resources and resolve community problems. CBD intends to build new cooperative ties. However, we recognize that in many cases communities are

unable to overcome their hostilities to work together, especially in the short term. The main risk is that, although community-based approaches seek to change patterns of behavior that contributed to conflict in the past, the methods themselves may lead to conflict in the present as communities vie for access to resources and position themselves in the post-conflict sphere. CBD programs are not a panacea, but they do provide a sound and sometimes successful programming option that should be explored in certain post-conflict settings.

Nonetheless, many donors tout the benefits of CBD programs as vehicles for mitigating conflict, building grassroots democracy, promoting community solidarity, and providing economic activity. They are often so popular that they are burdened with a plethora of goals that may dilute their initial purpose of rebuilding the community.

In the last several years, many donors and implementers have begun to evaluate their experience with this program model to identify best practices, synergies, and lessons learned. Implementers are finding that, while they may have some conflict mitigation affects, community-based programs can also exacerbate conflict if key design and implementation elements and linkages to broader program goals are overlooked. This paper seeks to capture these lessons for USAID and partner staff. It draws on the experience of USAID and implementing partners, as well as other donors using CBD programs in post-conflict settings. More specifically, the experience and lessons were collected through numerous internal and external discussions including:

- An October 2004 Workshop on "Community Infrastructure in Conflict-Affected Societies," where close to 50 USAID staff and partners shared key lessons learned and good practices;

- A January 2005 meeting at USAID, where Democracy and Governance (DG) Officers and others discussed community-based infrastructure and development programs;

- USAID's June 2005 DG Officer Training, where 30 DG Officers participated in a session on building democracy through community-based development; and

- The 15th Meeting of the Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network (CPR 15) in October 2005 where both bilateral and

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

The typical image of a community in a CBD program is a village composed of people from similar backgrounds who have lived together a long time. In a conflict-affected setting, the reality may be very different. A 'community' in a conflict-affected area may include members of different warring groups, internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, ex-combatants, and victims of violence along with and among the original inhabitants. In countries affected by prolonged violence, it may be primarily composed of women or young people. In some programs, communities may be groups of individuals united by similar interests, such as businessmen, farmers or health workers. A CBD community may be an urban slum or a rural village. For the purposes of this guide, a community is a group of people sharing some common interests and needs and who have to work together to solve problems.

multilateral donors shared experience and lessons learned for community-based development in conflict-affected environments.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT?

Community-based development (CBD) encompasses a wide range of programs, from reconstruction to reintegration, grassroots governance and democratization to conflict mitigation. The defining characteristic of a community-based program is that it takes place at the community-level and includes community participation in decision-making and project implementation. Programs might focus on training ex-combatants, rebuilding water systems and health centers, paying for teachers or community health workers, supporting cash-for-work programs, giving grants to local agricultural associations, improving local fiscal governance processes, or providing small-scale credit or grants to entrepreneurs. In short, community-based approaches have been utilized in virtually all sectors of traditional development programming.

While different donors and implementers have adopted a number of different designs in a variety of sectors, most community-based programs

employ a common basic approach. Facilitators train the community in a participatory, transparent process for identifying community problems and prioritizing them. The process focuses on building the community as a group, around common problems and common solutions. The community is usually given a grant, either in cash or in kind, to address the highest priority problems. The participatory process is set up to include marginalized groups like women, senior citizens, youth and excluded minorities, and to promote transparency in the use of program funds or resources. Programs can also include services or training, such as small-scale credit or leadership development, to further help the community realize its goals. Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program (NSP) is a recent example of a CBD program in action. Much has been written about participatory processes; for a comprehensive overview, please refer to *The World Bank Participation Sourcebook,* in particular, *Appendix I: Methods and Tools*.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

When the community determines project goals independently without parameters set by a donor or implementer, a program is said to be *community-driven development (CDD)*. By increasing participation at all phases, community-driven programs maximize community

empowerment and ownership, and projects are more likely to enjoy broad support within the community and to be appropriate for its level of capacity. For these reasons, the community-driven model is generally considered the ideal form of community-based programming. Although this model appears to imply a more hands-off approach, it in fact means that these programs require more training and facilitation to help communities that are often neglected, divided and dysfunctional work through a new approach to decision-making. It also means that the process moves more slowly and requires patience on the part of donors and implementing partners. It is not a rushed process. In many parts of the world, and especially in tribally-based societies, consensus of the kind needed to make CDD work requires extensive dialog so that all members of a community agree to the program.

For practical and political reasons, however, donors often do place parameters on the community. Donors may define the *type of benefits* to be provided (e.g. training will be for vocational skills or grants are available only for rehabilitation of basic infrastructure) or determine the *process* employed according to their needs, interests and capacities or based on their own assessment of partners' needs, interests, and capacities. When

a purely community-driven design is not practical or allowable, donors and implementers should nevertheless devolve as much responsibility to the community as possible. Again, patience is required to make this work.

WHY DO WE USE CBD IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED SETTINGS?

CBD programs are often the first development programs on the ground in conflict-affected areas. They can reinforce a sense of community, generate an improvement in livelihoods, help improve the community's ability to realize its goals, (attempt to) build transparent governance, and empower marginalized groups. Depending on the context, a CBD program may emphasize one objective over another. However, to achieve the program's conflict-mitigating potential, a balanced approach should be sought where empowerment and participation are goals, with reintegration and strengthened livelihoods the minimal results.

The breakdown of systems in conflict settings creates an opportunity to revisit negative social dynamics, such as domination by elites or a particular ethnic or religious group, and to foster healthier dynamics. At the same time, programs that promote changes in power relationships or social dynamics will create

The ABCs of CBD

• CBD programs rebuild relationships based upon trust between and within communities that were traumatized.
• Effective CBD is built upon transparent and participatory approaches that ensure all stakeholders are included in the process.
• CBD employment and infrastructure projects can be used to increase community welfare and empowerment
• Seeing quick, tangible. results reinforces community buy-in and ownership of CBD.
• CBD empowers communities by engaging them in inclusive problem solving and decision-making processes.
• Creating relationships between communities and local governments will enhance and sustain CBD initiatives from relief efforts to longer-term development.

tensions and may lead to conflict. Asking for change while trying to both stabilize and reintegrate communities that have been divided during a conflict is a challenge. Caution should be taken when designing and implementing programs with the goal of bringing together estranged groups. If the process does not go well, it can also exacerbate tensions within communities and make it very difficult to get groups to work together on future activities. Attitudinal and behavioral changes are long-term processes and are influenced by the outcomes of wider, more powerful political developments. National and regional conflicts cannot be resolved through community-level programming alone. If wider politics change for the better and community-level programs are linked with regional and national level peace processes and programs to address drivers of conflict, local attitudes are likely to follow.

PARTICIPATION

Community-based program designers emphasize that the *process* of community participation is the real product of the program – not the concrete projects, which are simple outputs. Programs can build on existing participatory decision-making processes or help communities develop new ones; either way, an inclusive process lays the foundation for the successful realization of other program goals, but also carries risks. A successful outcome can bring a community together, contributing to rebuilding solidarity and increasing empowerment. At the same time, participation can challenge traditional decision-making structures or patterns that have developed during conflict, and this may impede the authority of traditional leaders and lead to resistance. Open and transparent processes can also re-open old wounds and bring latent conflict to the surface in a community that may not be prepared to deal with disagreements non-violently. Different communities will have different capacities to develop participatory processes and implementers may find that some communities are simply not ready to work together in this way.

Programs that have proven to be effective have built a transparent and participatory process by ensuring that all stakeholders are included in decision-making, including formerly excluded groups like women, senior citizens, youth, the disabled, the landless, or minorities. They ensure that community members have access to program records and that regular reporting on the use of program resources is provided to the community. These programs also provide safe means for community members to report instances of corruption or exclusion, including drop boxes, ombudsmen, and independent

monitoring mechanisms through media and civil society groups. These measures help establish the foundation of a sustainable system for inclusive, non-violent participatory decision-making at the community-level. As will be discussed later in this guide, sustainability of the skills and systems developed in these programs is one of the biggest challenges implementers face.

COMMUNITY COHESION AND CONFLICT MITIGATION

One of the costs of internal violent conflict is the loss of *community cohesion* – the interpersonal relationships and the formal and informal networks and associations that help to build mutual trust, common purpose and a sense of community. Rebuilding relationships based on trust between and within communities that were traumatized, displaced or separated during the conflict is one of the fundamental goals of community-based development. Reconciliation involves creating trust and understanding between formerly disaffected groups and/or newcomers, such as refugees and ex-combatants, and is an essential task to building a lasting peace. It does not happen overnight or simply because legislation is passed or fighting ceases. The full and active participation of the people who have been affected by violence is crucial to the process. This effort can contribute to

momentum for peace by assisting participants and communities to develop their own initiatives and by creating space for people to interact in non-violent ways. Communities develop an improved capacity to identify and manage sources of conflict, promote cooperation and tolerance, participate in constructive dialogue, and generate and implement solutions by working on these programs. In pre-Dayton Bosnia, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (DCHA/OTI) and their implementing partner worked diligently in mixed communities to mobilize, organize and develop community cohesion to simulate recovery and to encourage reconciliation by using community-driven development processes. DCHA/OTI has successfully employed this methodology in a number of countries including Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Sierra Leone. However, the focus of the process varies with the circumstances particular to the needs of the country, from building social cohesion for political participation or recovery to reconciliation or reintegration.

LIVELIHOODS[1]

Individual livelihoods and local economies are quite often disrupted, if not devastated, after enduring a period of conflict.

1   For more information on Livelihoods, please refer to the USAID Toolkit on Livelihoods and Conflict

Building a Foundation for Reconciliation: Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, community-based programming was used to diffuse tensions between two rival communities mobilized by two different 'warlords.' Although the communities had very real issues, they were able to identify several projects that were of mutual interest to both sides. Through a carefully facilitated process, both sides saw the benefit of embarking on a joint project to repair a bridge of critical importance to the economies of both communities. They were required to work together to implement the project. The process also required constant third-party facilitation to overcome the frequent disagreements that emerged in the course of implementation, but ultimately they succeeded in completing the project. It is not clear if the implementation of this project had any lasting impact on relations between the two communities, but during the project development and implementation, the two communities and their leadership were able to set aside their differences and tensions subsided.

Rebuilding Livelihoods: Mozambique and Burundi

In Mozambique, USAID wanted to provide employment to as many ex-combatants as possible following the national elections in November 1994. They decided that the most effective employment generation method would be providing grants to a variety of groups, including churches, community groups and private employers. The implementer was given the authority to give grants that resulted in short and long-term employment of 12,000 ex-combatants. The grant recipients employed a mix of ex-combatants and civilians in their activities to avoid identifying the ex-combatant group as one that deserved special treatment. While many of the jobs were temporary, a number of grants did result in longer-term employment.

In Burundi, USAID focused on vocational skills training to promote successful community reintegration and to address both land pressure and lack of economic opportunity. The program trained students in six marketable vocational skill areas and offered grants to student-formed associations. This training assisted students with off-farm income-generating opportunities that helped alleviate land pressure and reduce poverty. Program recipients included undereducated youth, returning refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), ex-combatants and members of other vulnerable groups. Involving undereducated youth and ex-combatants reduced violent incidents that were being perpetrated by these groups. Students received training in communications and conflict resolution components, as well as literacy and math. Vocational skills students and their neighbors stated that the students were less violent and more productive citizens as a result of the communications and conflict mitigation training the students received.

Community-based programs can rebuild local livelihoods in order to foster support for larger peace processes.

Rehabilitation projects can generate short-term employment opportunities for community members, including vulnerable populations such as youth, ex-combatants, women and returning refugees and displaced persons. At the same time, these projects address infrastructure needs like water, sanitation and education, and can lessen tensions in communities by providing immediate economic relief. Finally, they provide fast, tangible evidence that someone is responding to urgent needs, building trust in the peace process and providing hope for the future.

Employment generation through community-based programs can serve to help rebuild local economies and improve livelihoods. It can also further stabilization by keeping vulnerable groups, like youth and ex-combatants, from being pulled back into conflict. Nonetheless, the short-term benefits of livelihoods generation using community-based approaches are often just that – short term. In order to ensure lasting impacts on livelihoods and prevent vulnerable groups from returning to violence, programs should be linked to broader development efforts to foster economic growth, develop markets, and improve the enabling

environment for private sector operations (including access to credit).

Infrastructure and employment in community-based programs increase the welfare of participants while providing a catalyst for increasing community empowerment, participation and solidarity. Ideally, they provide people with tangible benefits such as a bridge, electricity or a school, and needed income, while bringing groups together to make and act upon joint decisions in a participatory decision-making forum. Seeing quick, tangible results reinforces community buy-in and ownership to the process and makes it more likely that communities will continue to work together to identify their needs and realize their goals in a way in which they can all benefit. While the infrastructure itself is important, the process is what builds community ownership of the end results, as well as sustainable skills. Without ownership, even the maintenance of the product — be it a road, dam or school — is not guaranteed. Success is even more likely if the community contributes in-kind labor or commodities towards the project; it also increases the likelihood that the community will sustain the project given their personal investment.

These types of 'quick wins' are essential at the beginning of CBD programs to establish the credibility

Empowerment: What does the community need?

Sometimes there are tensions between the results that implementers want to see and the results that the community wants. It is important to remember that these programs are not "our" programs; they belong to communities and should reflect their needs and concerns. In one post-conflict case, community members were asked to work together to identify an initial project that the community needed. Basic infrastructure and almost all buildings were destroyed during the conflict, so the reconstruction needs in the community were great. Thus, the program manager expected the community would want to rebuild a road, the school, or perhaps the local clinic. Much to the manager's surprise, the community chose to build a fountain in the center of the town instead. While not convinced of the merits of the project, the manager decided to follow the community's wishes, and the community built a fountain in a central area. The fountain proved to be just what the community needed: they gathered there to meet and make other decisions that fueled the community's recovery. Despite initial reservations by the implementer, the community understood that what it needed most was to have a place to come together again as a community. As much as possible, donors and implementers should let the communities make their own decisions over the use of resources available through CBD programs.

of the program within the community and build trust. However, they are not a substitute for building a process for community empowerment and decision-making that is sustainable and linked to local and national level actors. Without a comprehensive process, marginalized groups may be neglected, and strong links may not be built to local government, both of which can lead to frustration and disappointment

within the community. Moreover, "quick wins" create hopes and expectations that, if unfulfilled, destroy the credibility of the donor, implementing partner or, worse, the national level authority whose legitimacy donors are seeking to improve.

EMPOWERMENT

Another fundamental goal of community-based initiatives is to enable communities to play an active role in determining their own

futures by being able to identify, understand and respond to their own problems. Communities recovering from violence may have developed effective coping systems that are strained by returning refugees and IDPs. Furthermore, they might have systems for decision-making that exclude certain segments of the community, which can contribute to their conflict problem. People may have been scattered by violence, and lost the systems and coping mechanisms that empowered and maintained their community. In all of these situations, there is a need to build skills within the community to engage in inclusive problem-solving and decision-making processes that give the community control over its own destiny.

Communities need to feel ownership of the projects. Buy-in comes both from participation, discussed above, and community decision-making and contribution to the project itself. Whenever possible, communities should make some type of contribution (cash, labor or in-kind materials), as experience has shown that it increases commitment to and sustainability of the project. The contribution encourages real involvement by the community in the project itself (through the labor, oversight and material), and ensures the value of the programming to the community. Community groups are more likely to select the most critical

projects if they have to contribute a significant portion of the costs in cash, in-kind materials or volunteer labor. The poorest regions have the highest rates of contribution on their own, often better than 1:1. They are likely to see the greatest benefit from programs, and therefore to contribute more when they are empowered to set their own priorities, even though they have fewer resources on the whole.

THE LINK TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Empowering local communities may not be popular with tribal or clan leaders (think Iraq and Afghanistan), or with local or national governments who may see new decision-making structures as undermining their traditional authority. One way to decrease this tension is to link programs with local government, where it exists and whenever possible, and to bring tribal leaders, where possible, into the process; remember this is an inclusive, not exclusive process. Building the capacity of local governments can help them to better understand the needs of their constituency, bring new insights and skills to the work of local authorities, and can help rebuild government-community relations. At the same time, implementers will likely run into local governments whose primary interests are different than the interests of the communities they

intend to serve. In these cases, community-based programs should partner with local government-focused programs to create incentives for local governments to respond to needs identified by the broader community. Where local government does not exist (as in the early days of post-September 11th Afghanistan) communities should work with ministry representatives at the regional or national level (again, when possible).

Furthermore, in post-conflict settings where local government is either missing or has to be rebuilt from scratch, assistance can help build critical skills through training in participatory methods and consultation processes. Officials sometimes assume that they need merely to show up at meetings, with little understanding of how they can actively engage in and facilitate a productive participatory process. Training will prepare them to work with communities that have developed participatory and advocacy skills and to respond effectively to constituencies approaching them with new ideas, skill sets and expectations. Creating relationships between communities and emerging local governments can enhance sustainability of community-based initiatives from the relief and transition phases into longer-term development, while aiding transformation of local governments into bodies able to

sponsor and provide essential community services. Whenever possible, donors and implementers should seek approaches that empower local government bodies at the same time they are empowering communities.

WHEN AND WHERE ARE CBD PROGRAMS APPROPRIATE?

Community-based development is a powerful tool, but may not always be the best or only solution in a conflict-affected area. Other programs may better address certain problems, especially when the conflict is at the regional or national level. Program designers should conduct an initial assessment to determine if CBD programs are appropriate. The assessment should consider the roots of the conflict. If the conflict is based at the community-level or evolved into a community-level problem, then a CBD program might be appropriate. If the conflict is between national level actors or includes drivers at the national or regional level, and the community is not the source of these divisions, a CBD program may not have a conflict-mitigating effect, although it may have other positive benefits. The key is to know the program goal.

CBD programs are meant to benefit the community as a whole. In some cases, this may mean goods are public – like roads or

Addressing Security Concerns in the Casamance

In the Casamance region of southern Senegal, a window of opportunity for peace appeared after 20 years of conflict. USAID designed a program which was deliberately community-driven to address the fundamental complaint of the Casamancais that they lacked resources and decision-making power to make a better life. Priorities were established by local groups, not by the government or by donors. However, the U.S. Embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO) took a very conservative approach to security, and travel to the area was not allowed. USAID staff members were able to persuade the Ambassador that there was a need to take some acceptable risks in order to do the job. The approach was successful and cited by many in the Casamance as supporting the peace process at a time when most donors were watching from the sidelines. The program got people talking to each other — one particularly effective approach was a series of "cultural weekends" which were negotiated with the rebels. The program staff were able to get the rebels' agreement not to attack or interfere. This encouraged people, including the rebels, to come together for the first time in years to air grievances and set village priorities for peace and development. Perhaps most important, it prompted people to hope again.

schools. In other cases, they may benefit individuals through training, tools, grants or loans. Transparency and accountability in the distribution of resources are doubly important when programs benefit individuals. In conflict-affected areas, all distributions of resources will be examined closely by locals for hints of bias. Some accusations may be unavoidable, but program managers should strive to ensure that all such claims are unfounded. In many cases, a community-based approach may not be the best means for enhancing individual livelihoods; both because of the conflicting interests involved and from a development standpoint. However, in other cases, programming focused more exclusively on economic development might be more appropriate.

Program designers also need to consider the security situation in the community. Will monitors be able to access the community? In Burundi, violent crimes rose significantly in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Anyone seen to have assets became a target of opportunity, limiting the mobility of program staff and increasing the vulnerability of expatriate organization offices, vehicles and staff members carrying assets. In Iraq, expatriate staff relied on local staff and third country nationals to implement projects, as expatriates could put themselves and locals at risk by

visiting project sites.

Connected to the issues of staff and asset security is the broader issue of elite capture. "Do No Harm" principles dictate that we carefully consider what effect the resources and assets are likely to have on the conflict.[2] If security is low and there is a significant chance that resources will be captured by elites or diverted by parties to the conflict for their own purposes, then plans must be made to mitigate this risk, otherwise the program should not be pursued.

The final two factors that designers need to consider are opportunity cost and sustainability. Donors usually have limited resources to address problems in conflict-affected areas and need to consider if a CBD program is the best investment to address their overall strategic goals. In terms of sustainability, the assessment should determine if the program will build skills the society needs and can utilize, and if the local government can meet these needs post-program implementation. If the skills are inappropriate to the needs of the society, the program may not be appropriate. If it creates demand for services that local government does not have the resources to supply, it can

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[2]   For more details on the "Do No Harm" approach and recent research by Mary B. Anderson and the Cooperative for Development Action, visit www.cdainc.com

exacerbate tensions in the long run.

The World Bank has a checklist of the minimum conditions for using CBD programs in conflict contexts.

HOW DO WE LINK CBD PROGRAMS TO BROADER STRATEGIC GOALS?

Conflicts are complex phenomena. In order to have positive and lasting effects on conflict through local level interventions alone, the root causes of conflict must be local in nature. Where conflict is regional, national or international in scope, and root causes are structural, related to state capacity or will, legitimacy or effectiveness, local level interventions alone are not likely to have any lasting impact on the conflict. Mary Anderson's "Reflecting on Peace Practice" research, which involved an examination of hundreds of cases of different types of peace programs, found that measurable impacts on conflict were only achieved when programs that focused on change in individual values and behaviors were consciously linked to programs that focused on institutional change and when programs that targeted *more* people were linked to programs that ensured participation of *key* people.

Three types of goals are discussed throughout this guide:

Participation and Empowerment; Community Cohesion and Conflict Mitigation; and Livelihoods. In a conflict environment, we often try to address issues in more than one of these areas, and sometimes in all of them. In planning for handoff and sustainability, it is critical to understand the manageable interests of the program; that is, what it can realistically achieve on its own, as well as what it cannot. But this analysis on its own is not sufficient. We often limit the scopes of programs, based on what they can realistically achieve with the available time and funding, but then fail to identify needed changes in the enabling environment and at other levels (regional and national) that must take place for local level CBD solutions to have lasting impact. In a conflict environment, durable results often depend on changes beyond the local level, such as peace processes, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR), restoration of public security, and the ability of the host government to begin addressing structural issues at the root of the conflict.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION

CBD programs aim to empower communities to actively participate in identifying their own priorities and in determining use of community resources. While most communities react with enthusiasm to this, the end of

donor-funded programs often only increases dissatisfaction with local and national authorities and foments grievances that can contribute to future conflict, if decentralization of decision-making and budget authority are not forthcoming. Without decentralization, the community has limited ability to influence use of public funds, and the process of prioritizing community needs risks becoming an empty exercise. For this reason, the World Bank is increasingly focusing its CBD resources to complement and support broader decentralization programs, using a model that engages government institutions at all levels.

Programs supported by external funding have the potential to cause unrealistic expectations of what can be achieved when donor funding dries up. Managing local expectations is critical. Community members must plan for what will happen after the program ends and external resources are withdrawn. Program departures can create a great deal of anxiety in communities that were neglected during conflict and marginalized prior to the conflict. Links to local government ensure that communities continue to have a voice in decisions that affect them and should be built into programs whenever possible. Implementers must also help community members explore other resources they have available, including

national level programs through government line ministries, other private and public donors, and their own local means of financing. One implementer set up a fair for communities 'graduating' from their program where they could meet with local and national government associations, international and private donors, and other possible sources of funding, so they could continue to use the systems they had developed for self-help under the program to access outside funding.

Where community empowerment and participation are key goals, handoff and sustainability strategies should link participatory processes with institutional change, to the maximum extent possible. Otherwise the sense of empowerment generated by CBD programs can swiftly shift to dissatisfaction that reinforces, rather than mediates, underlying causes of fragility and conflict.

REINTEGRATION AND SOCIAL RECONCILIATION

CBD is used in conflict-affected settings to address the causes and consequences of conflict at the local level, and to facilitate the integration or reintegration of vulnerable groups, such as ex-combatants, IDPs, and refugees, while fostering an environment conducive to reconciliation and recovery. CBD programs with this type of goal will be most

effective in the long-term if they are implemented as a complementary part of a set of linked interventions that range from initial stabilization activities to long-term peace processes and development. The ultimate success of reintegration depends not only on the capacity of the community to heal relationships across former lines of division, but on the state's ability to create equitable and integrated systems for service delivery, protect individual rights by responding to grievances and deliver justice according to the rule of law.

USAID experience and that of other major donors, such as the World Bank, points to the importance of *how* CBD approaches are implemented in determining whether programs support the building of cohesive communities or work against this goal. The World Bank has much to say on this issue:

> "The process becomes magnified in communities where social relationships have been rubbed raw by violence. Particular care and attention to developing trust, inclusion, and accountability through the various self-descriptions, planning, mobilizing, implementing, and evaluating activities is essential. This puts substantial weight on

the content and quality of the facilitation and highlights the need for continual monitoring of power relationships, elite capture, participation, and leadership roles. Equally critical is a clear understanding of the community history and social dynamics and constant review of the impact of interventions on the local context." (World Bank Website, section on social development)

LIVELIHOODS

There is little evidence to suggest that short-term employment schemes related to realization of CBD projects result in longer-term or ongoing employment for participants. Therefore, if programs contain a short-term livelihoods component meant to occupy unemployed young men, stabilize income and provide alternatives to participation in conflict, sustainable results beyond the term of the CBD program will require that the program match short-term employment and skills training to existing local market demand and supply or to longer-term economic growth initiatives that aim to generate demand and/or develop new markets. At the same time, care must be taken to identify and address potential constraints in the enabling environment (i.e. availability of

micro-credit, distribution and market infrastructure, licensing, tax and other legal or regulatory issues, security, equal opportunity and rights). Without linking CBD to broader economic growth and other sectoral programs that address enabling environment constraints, short-term benefits of employment in CBD-related projects are not likely to have much effect on employment and recruitment of youth into violence over the long-run.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES AND RISKS?

Working at the community-level presents many challenges, some of which have already been discussed in this paper. These challenges include building transparency and accountability in inhospitable political climates, sustainability, measuring the success of the program in the long-term, and managing the potential for exacerbating sources of conflict and expectations built up by programs.

THE 'KITCHEN SINK' EFFECT

Most community-based programs seek to address the four broad goals– building inclusive participatory processes, empowering communities, improving livelihoods, and promoting community cohesion. However the visibility of these programs and their ability to have a quick impact on the lives of ordinary people often tempts program managers to use them to solve all conflict and development ills. These goals can build up on a project, diluting its purpose and effect.

Loading too many goals onto a community-based program leads to two problems. First, it can change the program from a community-driven process to a donor-driven one. If the program is constantly adapted to meet different goals, the communities will adapt their project proposals accordingly, perhaps jettisoning projects that they value more in favor of those they think the donor wants and will fund.

Donors may have a primary project purpose that they want communities to understand and work toward. They may also have a multitude of secondary goals which complicate what the project is about. Keep the goal and objective straightforward and simple so that communities understand that purpose. And remember, the goal and objective should match that of the community; otherwise the project is the donor's, and not the community's.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparency and accountability are two of the most important parts

of building trust in the program, in the implementer, and, slowly, in the community. Implementers have used a variety of tools to ensure accountability, from posting public signboards with program expenses to hiring independent local journalists to monitor programs. One innovative example, from a program in Serbia, built transparency into the prioritization process by having community members vote for projects with stickers on a public board in a large town hall meeting. Everyone could see exactly which projects got the most votes. Transparency and accountability mechanisms also help to counter the risk of elite capture in post-conflict settings. While not post-conflict, after Hurricane Mitch, Honduran communities were encouraged to nominate individuals to serve as community ombudsmen to oversee and monitor the re-building of the community to ensure what was agreed to was actually carried out. Information about the relief effort was widely broadcast on local radio so people knew what was happening nationally and locally.

These tools are efforts to fight often systemic corruption that pervades post-conflict (and post-disaster) settings. Changing the patterns of behavior that lead to corruption requires changing the incentives for corruption. CBD programs can help do this by tying funding to good performance against a set of standards for

transparency and accountability, and by program implementers holding both local community members and their own staff accountable for any instances of corruption. Records should be open to the communities, and clear measures should be taken in response to confirmed allegations of corruption. Not responding to corruption runs the risk of reinforcing a culture of impunity that arises during and following conflict, and harms the credibility of the program and community-level decision-makers. At the same time, responding to corruption exposes community members and implementers to threats. In the same Serbia program, a community that exposed misuse of funds by a contractor received death threats. However, the community's persistence and the implementer's support led to the prosecution of the contractor on four counts of fraud.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Community-based programs incorporate a number of means for evaluating success, from looking at the number of community projects completed to surveys on reduced tensions to the number of cases of reported corruption. These are all key measures of program success in the short-run, while the program is ongoing. In the long-run, donors and implementers need to do a better job of following up with communities to see if the skills and systems developed under

the program continue to impact the way the community members make decisions and interact with one another. Programs that contend that they are building grassroots democratization and new local leadership need to follow-up on that claim with long-term evaluations of the program impact. Donors must also recognize that, without efforts to integrate community participatory processes into the institutional structure of the country, long-term impact is likely to be limited.

EXACERBATING CONFLICT

While CBD programs are touted for rebuilding trust, they can inflame old conflicts as they inject resources at the community level. Perceptions that different parts of the community have received disproportionate program benefits or that one group is dominating decision-making can exacerbate tensions. A clear and transparent process can help mitigate possible arguments over distribution of resources and accusations of corruption, although it should be recognized that the very process of discussing problems and deciding on solutions may touch on old tensions. Implementers must be careful to monitor the distribution of program benefits and give the community means to address complaints and report corruption. They must also work with community members to determine when the decision-making process is getting too contentious, and

to generate means for resolving tensions without violence.

Employment generation programs can also create conflict. Some in the community may perceive that one ethnic or sub-group – e.g., youth, ex-combatants – are benefiting while other groups are not. Tensions exist between community-based programs, which are focused on the community in general, and income-generation or job creation programs, which are focused on the individual. Public processes for making decisions that result in individual benefit introduce the possibility of conflicts of interest and corruption. Careful assessment and analysis of local dynamics and actors, as well as enlisting the support of knowledgeable local partners, can help program managers design and implement programs that avoid this dilemma.

THE DIFFICULTY OF LINKING UP

USAID still faces institutional challenges in creating effective linkages between different sectoral programs and between programs along the continuum from relief and stabilization to longer-term development. The requirements of different funding streams, prevalence of earmarks, and the development of field programs by a variety of offices and in diverse locations (i.e. bilateral or regional mission versus centrally designed and managed programs) all pose

challenges to creating the types of conscious linkages between programs that are necessary to maximize impact over time. The net result is that programs often emphasize short-term or sector-specific goals — such as reintegration of ex-combatants, short-term employment to keep young men busy, improved citizen participation, etc. — and are not strategically linked to follow-on programs for impacts beyond the life of the initial community program.

Alternately, programs can drift from one goal to the next, with new goals grafted on with each new program or strategy cycle, resulting in confusion among communities about the goals of CBD and giving the impression that the approach is donor-driven, rather than a community-driven. Although USAID often implements CBD programs with some restrictions, program sustainability is enhanced by maximizing the extent to which programs are community-owned and driven.

DONOR COORDINATION

Donors and implementers often have differing, and sometimes conflicting, approaches to CBD within the same host country, which challenges institutionalization of the approach within communities and host country institutions. The World Bank tends to work exclusively through local and regional government structures, while USAID has traditionally implemented CBD using formal and informal civil society structures. Given the reality of funding constraints, the need for greater donor collaboration and the lack of common approaches and tools, it is increasingly important to attain the necessary breadth and depth of coverage for sustainable impacts.

Even within a single country, USAID's own implementing partners can vary significantly, in terms of their operating assumptions and methodologies used at the community-level. The degree to which implementers' CBD programs are connected horizontally and vertically to other programs in ways that foster sustainability also fluctuates.

Although there are inherent institutional challenges that USAID and other donors face, a new focus on intra- and interagency cooperation, the recent push for development of more flexible mechanisms, and earlier and more frequent coordination within USAID and with others is leading to more effective planning for handoff and sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY: WHAT DO WE LEAVE BEHIND?

The final goals of community-based development programs are usually ambitious: stable, integrated communities that can identify and prioritize problems,

manage conflict constructively, tap into local and external resources to solve problems, and incubate future local leaders and democratic principles. There is evidence that well-run programs can achieve some of these lofty goals. The World Bank's research on the conflict mitigation potential of the Kecamatan Development Programs (KDP) in Indonesia indicates that communities did learn how to integrate excluded voices and manage conflictive situations constructively using techniques and skills acquired through the program. However, a recent KDP program study raises new questions about CBD program impact:

> "The study conducted a randomized control analysis of corruption in 600 KDP road building projects... The study found that the intervention of announcing an increased probability of a government audit and reporting the audit results directly to a public village forum was more effective at reducing corruption as compared to increasing grass roots participation in the monitoring process. In short, the study tells us how to make participation more effective but it doesn't say whether participation in and of itself makes for greater effectiveness. "(World Bank Website section on social development).

Broad-based research on the long-term benefits of these programs for conflict mitigation, democratization and development is just beginning.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the most successful programs build in sustainability strategies from the earliest planning stages. This is especially critical in conflict-affected settings because conflict mitigation requires a multi-sector, layered approach that often extends beyond the scope of any one development program. Linkages to other initiatives, effective capacity-building, and integration with host country institutions are all emerging as important factors in achieving sustainable results through CBD programming.

In terms of the sustainability of individual community-level initiatives, evaluations show that community contributions and volunteerism tend to improve future maintenance of community projects. Furthermore, effective capacity-building and continuing access to resources to finance and sustain community investments are essential to ensure both the ability of communities to manage the process on their own and ongoing relevance of CBD processes. Without access to resources, whether through local decentralization processes or donor support, community committees and decision-making processes often atrophy and die.

Similarly, without buy-in by key stakeholders like local institutions and community capacity to carry on participatory decision-making processes without outside assistance, CBD is unlikely to be effective or sustained. With capacity-building, a community-wide approach is recommended, in order to avoid exacerbating conflict between groups, facilitate integration of communities, and to ensure broad coverage and buy-in.

In conclusion, the key challenge for sustainability of CBD programs in conflict-affected settings is to balance program resources between the immediate response to rapidly changing community needs and priorities and longer-term concerns of capacity-building, leadership development and linkages to broader reform or development programs. More information about effective strategies for promoting sustainability is provided in the next section: Lessons Learned.

Photo credit: USAID/OTI

USAID/DCHA/OTI program in Macedonia supports projects identified and implented by communities themselves. In this villiage in southern Macedonia, DCHA/OTI provided materials, while villagers provided the labor necessary to rehabilate a road linking their health clinic and mayor's office to the main road.

LESSONS LEARNED

This section provides lessons learned and program options for the different stages of community-based development program implementation. These recommendations are drawn from the experience of a diverse group of donors and implementers. The section covers issues in project design, project start-up, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and close-out or handoff. Each phase includes key recommendations from implementers accompanied by examples of program options from the field.

PROJECT DESIGN

The first section of this resource guide covers the major issues that project designers will need to consider when developing and implementing community-based programs. The following lessons learned and program options should further help guide thinking as programmers move through the design process.

CONDUCT CONFLICT ASSESSMENTS

Analyzing the underlying causes and dynamics of conflict, the various actors and their areas of influence and control, the conflict history, and the political and socio-economic profile of the conflict is crucial to successful community-

based programming in conflict-affected regions. Understanding community-based conflict and factors requires micro-level analysis. A rigorous, participatory and grounded assessment, rather than a desk-based conflict analysis, should accompany any support to community-based initiatives. If a quick start up is required, a well-designed rapid appraisal can be used to gather information about an area in a succinct manner. Assessment tools have been developed by a number of organizations, including USAID. See the Resources section at the end of this guide for further information.

DEFINE PROJECT GOALS

Project designers should carefully define project goals and examine the trade-offs and tensions between them. Communities affected by conflict will have an overwhelming number of needs and it will be impossible for one project to resolve them all. In defining project goals, designers need to be precise. Goals should be consistent with the larger program strategy and have concrete linkages to other projects in the portfolio. They should address issues raised by the conflict assessment and set clear priorities for the project that are linked to these issues and that can be communicated

to the participating communities. Goals should be kept to a minimum, be simple to explain and straightforward to understand.

ESTABLISH PROGRAM LINKAGES

While linkages and communication between and among donors and implementers are important in all development planning, they are particularly key in conflict areas. First, conflict-affected areas may be flooded with donors and implementers. Second, these donors have often set up multiple funding mechanisms. These multiple mechanisms and multiple programs lead to a third problem as communities have trouble absorbing the influx. The final problem is that while some communities may be flooded with assistance, others may be neglected, leading to inequities in coverage. Therefore, the linkages between programs are doubly important in these settings. Community-based programs also need to be explicitly linked to activities at the local and national level. One of the key roles for community-based programs is to assist the community members to reconnect with and more effectively relate to governance and civil society structures and vice versa. Building on existing structures that meet this need, rather than attempting to create new ones, is an appropriate approach. Community-based activities need to connect to each other horizontally, and should also connect vertically to activities at the national and regional levels. For example, a community-based program will set up committees to make decisions about the use of program funds. Designers must consider whether there is a valid existing structure available to use, how these committees will communicate with local government, and how they might complement ongoing activities. Programs for building schools, clinics or other points of service delivery should be coordinated with sectoral programs also serving in the community.

DECIDE BREADTH VERSUS DEPTH: COMMUNITY SELECTION AND ENGAGEMENT

Program designers need to make a decision about which communities will participate in the project. The fundamental decision is one of breadth versus depth. Will the project choose to work in many communities, spreading resources evenly, but thinly, or will it choose to work in a few communities, investing resources and training deeply, but more narrowly? Many considerations impact this decision. Designers need to consider the goals of their program. If the program goal is to mitigate local level conflict, it is unlikely that all communities in a country will be equally vulnerable. In this case, it makes sense to restrict the program to a more narrow set of communities,

allowing the implementer to invest deeply in both training and resources. If needs are more evenly spread across the country, as in a country recovering from a widespread conflict, it makes sense to include as many communities as possible, both to address needs and to avert the perception that some communities are benefiting more than others, which could increase the risk of renewed violence.

The choice of breadth versus depth has significant impact on the degree to which communities invest in the process of the program. Establishing a sustainable participatory process, one that fundamentally shifts power dynamics in a community, can take years. A program that only invests in one or two projects per community is not going to have as deep an impact on that community's decision-making structure as one that takes the community through multiple iterations of the decision-making process. Program designers need to consider their goals carefully, and look at the issues raised in their baseline assessments, and then decide whether it is more appropriate to work broadly or deeply.

PROJECT START-UP

INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY

Projects are more effective when communities are involved from the beginning. Listening to local populations and stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness and level of conflict sensitivity in the program. The Collaborative for Development Action has initiated the Listening Project to elicit insights from recipient communities. The project is still ongoing as of this report's publication, and updates can be found at www.cdainc.com/lp/. It also helps implementers understand the local context and needs. All key stakeholders in the community, including potential spoilers, should be represented in the process so that the program is not perceived to favor one group over another. This is not always an easy task when groups have been displaced, marginalized or are in the process of returning home.

Community-based programming cannot be assumed to diffuse tensions at the local level. If implemented poorly, they can exacerbate tensions in or between communities. If perceived to be inequitable, to favor one group over another or to have been 'captured' by special interest groups, community-based programs can inflame communities. One safeguard is to utilize skilled, trusted and impartial local staff to facilitate community participation and dialogue around issues identified by a broad segment of the community. Another mechanism is to include conflict management skills training

from project start-up.

It is also important for implementers to establish ways to integrate marginalized groups from project onset. Ideally, representatives of these groups directly participate in decision-making structures. In Kosovo, USAID helped community members establish Community Improvement Councils comprised of 12-15 people who reflected the diversity of the local population. The Councils identified their community's priority reconstruction needs and USAID provided the material resources. Members of the Community Improvement Councils emerged as representatives of their communities, providing donors and international organizations with information on real needs and priorities as defined by Kosovars. Increasing, the amount of social contact between local majorities and minorities, such as the Roma, through the committees is instrumental in overcoming underlying intra-community stereotypes, helping prevent violent clashes and keeping armed insurgents from recruiting locally.

However, sometimes it is difficult to empower marginalized people to participate. In these cases, project staff should be prepared to find creative ways to incorporate them into the process. On the Kosovo project, staff took several approaches to ensure diversity of voices and equitable participation at the community-level. First, in overcoming the challenge of integrating women into participatory processes, staff frequently met with women outside of organized community meetings. These side-bar meetings, often referred to by staff as 'coffee cup surveys,' allowed women to express opinions and perspectives that they felt uncomfortable expressing in larger community meetings. Project personnel were then able to introduce these perspectives to the larger group without drawing attention to the women who had expressed them. Further, because women were burdened with housework, childcare and other time consuming tasks, long community meetings were difficult for them to attend. Side bar meetings allowed women to interject their views without the time investment necessary to attend community meetings.

Similar techniques were used to engage youth in community-based processes. By holding sub-meetings specifically with youth, the staff were able to draw out information and perspectives from the youth that could then be introduced to the larger groups for discussions. These techniques helped to triangulate information, better inform international staff unfamiliar with community issues and dynamics, and ensure that the views of traditionally

The Benefits of Training: Iraq

In Iraq, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives and its local partners and implementers invested time and resources training local staff during the early stages of the program. This training was instrumental in the success of the program as the environment became less secure over time and most expatriate staff were not able to travel to program sites. Local staff were able to take over project implementation effectively. Without this investment during a critical window of opportunity, the program would not have been able to achieve the results that it did.

underrepresented groups were represented in larger discussions.

KEEP PROMISES

Implementers should quickly establish credibility and build trust within communities by ensuring that any promises made are kept. Establishing trust with participating communities and delivering on promises will help achieve program goals and promote community buy-in. Designing a rapid launch that includes quick community selection, mobilization and program implementation will help establish credibility by demonstrating tangible benefits in a short period of time. One of the key lessons learned from multiple projects in post-conflict settings is that quick-impact projects (projects that are implemented and completed within 60 days) have a huge effect on building trust with the community. They demonstrate to long-neglected and damaged communities that the program is real, that implementers really intend to do something in the community, and that the implementers will follow through on their stated plans.

Experienced implementers have cited a tension between delivering on quick-impact and establishing a participatory, inclusive process that is supposed to build longer-term conflict management and governance benefits. Even with the quick-impact projects, it is important to establish a

transparent, participatory process to choose priorities. This process may not be exactly the same as the longer-term process used by the community. It may involve town hall meetings or canvassing the community to come to a quick decision on a list of priorities. Whatever process is used, it is key that the first project benefit as many community members as possible, to establish credibility and widespread buy-in. At the same time, implementers and donors must bear in mind that real change will only be achieved over time with a sustained presence and trust in the community.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

TRAIN LOCAL STAFF AND COMMUNITIES

Hiring and training appropriate local staff to design and implement the program is essential. Local staff will have the most direct contact with communities in highly divided conflict-affected environments. They should be included in all phases of program planning, design, implementation and monitoring, both to build capacity and to develop commitment to the program model. With competent local staff or third country nationals, expatriates do not need to drive the process. When the project ends, the training that local staff have received will enable them to take leadership

roles in their communities. Local staff composition should reflect the different groups in a population, in terms ethnic, gender and religious makeup.

At the same time, local and expatriate staff need to focus on building the capacity of local actors, both governmental and non-governmental, to continue to develop their communities after the project ends. Training to promote sustainability is the most important investment in CBD projects. Skills and processes for dialogue and decision-making provide the structure for democratic and civil-society participation.

In Haiti, USAID helped to develop the skills and capacities of 324 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) by training and encouraging them to undertake civic actions. Civic actions were viewed as group and/or collective actions to engage the state to express their interests and ideas, exchange information, and achieve mutual development goals. Examples included meeting with elected officials to raise constituent issues, writing letters to authorities expressing collective concerns, organizing marches and writing press releases to publicize issues. The success of the training was the result, in large part, of careful training design and delivery by skilled facilitators. Participants left the training sessions after witnessing a compelling example of how democratic internal

management of organizations, in combination with well-thought out and articulated actions, can produce change. Methods were used that modeled democratic behavior and existing participatory organizational dynamics. This allowed for younger members, women, and illiterate individuals to be included in training activities and to have their voices heard equal to other participants'. In addition, a mixture of organization members and leaders resulted in interaction that reinforced democratic values.

An important lesson is that the training strategy, in combination with follow-up interventions, should promote *ownership* of the content. The group's knowledge of the training content is only a precondition and not a trigger for civic action. Group training that gives participants the opportunity to define issues and take ownership of the process can spur community action, increase understanding among participants, encourage democratic practices, lend respect for different and divergent opinions, and help build coalitions and networks.

MODEL TRANSPARENCY AND ENFORCE ACCOUNTABILITY

Implementers should practice transparent decision-making processes regarding the use of funds and selection of beneficiary groups. It is important to be explicit from the beginning about

what the program is trying to achieve and whom it is targeting. These programs can appear to favor one part of a community over others. Therefore, transparent decision-making processes should be reinforced with good information dissemination throughout the program area so that the people who are not involved in the decision-making process still know and understand what is going on around them. Linkages with media programs in target communities, where they exist, provide an opportunity for synergy.

When local actors fail to be transparent, there must be ways for community members to report issues anonymously and enforceable means to hold the actors accountable. Ideally, enforcement should occur through the local legal system, with those accused of corruption going through an open legal process to resolve disputes. However, local legal systems may not be functioning, may be unwilling or unable to prosecute community members with standing, or may be receptive to bribery. In these cases, implementers and communities must have other means to punish corruption. These might include firing contractors who solicit bribes, removing committee members with documented habits of corruption, or increasing monitoring of community financial transactions under the program. Some programs have also used

independent NGOs or media outlets to monitor corruption, giving them the option of publicly shaming those accused to change local attitudes towards corrupt practices.

SCALE UP FOR BROADER IMPACT

Since CBD initiatives are usually small-scale and focused on individual communities, scaling up and out are critical to achieving broader impacts. In addition, scaling up helps mitigate potential negative impacts of donor support that benefits some communities, but not others. The World Bank suggests that the ultimate goal of community-based approaches is to move from "islands of excellence" to operations on a national scale, where the greatest number of individuals can benefit. It is important to avoid program designs that foster clientelistic relationships and accountability to donors, rather than building systems that reinforce accountability of local government and institutions to their citizens.[3] The success of CBD ultimately depends on building new structures for citizen-government interaction that are anchored in local regulations and supported by an enabling institutional environment.

3 Uvin, Peter. From a presentation delivered at "Building Civil Society in Post-Conflict Environments: From the Micro to the Macro" at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC: February 1, 2006.

In addition, donors and program designers should consider how local level processes can be expanded to at least a critical mass of other communities, deepened to include application beyond specific community projects, and linked with existing or developing systems of decentralized government, institutional development, and capacity of local, regional, and central institutions and authorities. Scaling up requires longer-term time horizons than most donors typically utilize for strategy and program planning. In addition, as with so much in CBD, scaling up requires significant attention be paid to capacity and commitment of communities, their leaders, and institutions.

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) refers to Binswanger and Aiyar's three sequential stages for moving toward large-scale CBD: initiation, scaling up, and consolidation. With the three stages, donors and implementers address critical issues related to scaling up using a phased approach. In the initiation phase, program implementers focus on enhancing participation, engaging in dialogue on decentralization, and/or piloting CBD programs. After successful piloting of CBD programs, the actual scaling up phase commences, building upon pilot successes. Scaling up requires planning for training and logistics, and development and field testing of manuals. Although not explicitly mentioned in the literature, we suggest that further progress must be pursued in this phase to push decentralization and other critical changes in the enabling environment forward, with considerable attention paid to capacity-building at all levels. Finally, in the consolidation phase, implementers and donors "may push for national coverage, moving from participation to full empowerment, capacity development, expanding and deepening CBD functionally to address issues that may not have been first priorities…and/or forming networks or federations of stakeholders.[4]"

HANDOFF

Handoff is smoothest when it has been built into program design from the beginning. Integration of program activities and structures into existing or nascent host country institutions and early and on-going coordination with a range of stakeholders, including other donors, who will be active in program areas beyond the life of the program, eases the transition as programs close out.

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4   Binswanger, H., and S. Aiyar. Scaling up community driven development: Theoretical underpinnings and program design implications. Draft. World Bank, Washington, D.C.: 2003.

While host country integration is the most optimal strategy for handoff of community-based development programs, it is often not feasible. In order to rely entirely on this strategy, activities must be undertaken in tandem with decentralization processes that shift responsibility for decision-making and resource allocation to the local level. Decentralization is itself a long-term process, requiring significant capacity-building. When paired with decentralization, CBD training for both community members and local leaders should be incorporated or explicitly linked with other initiatives supporting the decentralization process to ensure that CBD processes are ultimately incorporated into new institutional structures.

When host country integration is not a viable handoff strategy, either because decentralization is not occurring or the program timeframe is incompatible with that of decentralization, then handoff strategies should focus on linking individual communities with potential sources of resources or with decision-making structures at other levels, such as a Poverty Reduction Strategy or regional development planning processes. Coordination with other donors and other programs in the USAID portfolio becomes critical. This is particularly important as programming shifts from relief and stabilization to development, because implementers and funding streams often change. A smooth handoff will be unlikely if CBD programs have not been planned as part of a longer-term strategy, in coordination with actors across the divide from relief or stabilization to development.

Successful handoff also requires that the communities themselves buy into CBD principles and attain sufficient capacity to continue and adapt community-based approaches to new challenges and conditions, as communities begin to consider longer-term needs. If donors and implementers consider handoff needs from the design phase, they can help communities pursue and monitor progress toward institutionalization or incorporation into follow-on programs. Ultimately, CBD will only be viable as a community process inasmuch as communities are able to mobilize resources to address identified priorities.

Photo credit: Elisabeth Kvistashvili/USAID

Irrigation canal cleaning in the fall of 2002 in Marja district, Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

RESOURCES
USAID PROCUREMENT MECHANISMS

USAID/Washington does not have any procurement mechanisms specifically designed to implement community-based development projects, but should a USAID Mission prefer not to procure its own bilateral program, there are some USAID mechanisms that can be accessed. The following tools, resources and mechanisms are available to USAID Missions and Bureaus.

INSTABILITY, CRISIS AND RECOVERY PROGRAMS (ICRP) IQC
The ICRP IQC is designed to provide USAID staff worldwide access to the full range of support services needed to implement conflict-related programs. ICRP facilitates USAID's conflict-related analytical and research agenda, and also supports the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of conflict management and mitigation activities. The mechanism is designed to award grants based on mission needs, facilitate training and capacity building for local groups, and provide quick response.

Prime contractors: the Academy for Educational Development; AMEX International, Inc.; ARD, Inc.; Development Alternatives, Inc.; and Management Systems International, Inc.

For more information, contact Helen Glaze, HGlaze@usaid.gov

SUSTAINABLE URBAN MANAGEMENT (SUM II) IQC
The SUM II IQC delivers short, medium and long-term technical assistance, training and advisory services in five functional areas: (1) Urban Services and Shelter; (2) Improved Local and Urban Government Management; (3) Urban Environmental Management; (4) Disaster Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery; and (5) Urban Finance and Credit Systems. This is a new IQC mechanism with a $300 million ceiling and an ordering period until September 30, 2009 (the SUM II expiration date). The period of performance extends for three years beyond that until September 30, 2012. Services are obtained by Missions and Washington-based operating units through negotiated Task Orders or Quick-Response Technical Directions.

Prime contractors: Planning and Development Collaborative International, Inc. (PADCO); Research Triangle Institute (RTI); the Urban Institute; Associates for Rural Development (ARD); The Louis Berger Group (LBG); and Mendez, England and Associates (ME & A).

For more information on SUM II, contact Rob Schneider at roschneider@ usaid.gov.

CITYLINKS
CityLinks is a Leader with Associates award for delivering technical assistance to local governments on a range of municipal issues through peer-to-peer learning. The award facilitates partnerships between a U.S. city or urban-related association and a developing or transitional country city or association. CityLinks partnerships can also take the form of south-south, east-east, 3-way city and clusters of cities partnerships. The host city can be a secondary, tertiary or capital city, so long as there is political will to undertake positive change. CityLinks replaced the Resource Cities program, which provided similar services from 1999 to 2003.

Prime contractor: The International City/Country Management Association

For more information, contact Jesssica Tulodo at jtulodo@usaid.gov.

CITIES ALLIANCE
In collaboration with other bilateral and multi-lateral development agencies, USAID is working to scale-up slum upgrades to citywide and nationwide levels by involving the urban poor directly in the management of their future and cities. Through the Cities Alliance, members are also working toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Target, "significantly improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020." Matching grant funds are available to support USAID Mission-sponsored applications for slum/urban upgrading and participatory city development strategies.

For more information, contact Jesssica Tulodo at jtulodo@usaid.gov.

DISADVANTAGED URBAN YOUTH PROGRAM
EGAT/PR/UP is managing Cooperative Agreements that focus on employment of disadvantaged urban youth. These activities intensively engage the private sector to assure that technical training and job placement and mentoring occurs. UP has developed significant expertise in this area and is able to provide technical assistance to Missions. Through mechanisms including the Urban Partnership Grant Fund, UP is able to provide financial support to Missions wishing to develop proposals and implement programs.

For more information, contact Margaret Harritt at mharritt@usaid.gov.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WEB RESOURCES

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT, WORLD BANK

Community-Driven Development (CDD) is broadly defined as giving control of decisions and resources to community groups and local governments. This World Bank website provides tools, resources and information to support CDD:
www.worldbank.org/cdd

AREA-BASED DEVELOPMENT, UNDP

Area-based development is a core UNDP mechanism to promote reintegration. For more information on area-based development, visit:
www.undp.org/bcpr/recovery/area-baseddevelopment.htm

CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RECONSTRUCTION UNIT, WORLD BANK

Conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction are critical to the World Bank's mission of poverty reduction. This site provides information and resources on conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction activities:
www.worldbank.org/conflict

OTHER BEST PRACTICE RESOURCES

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING PROJECTS & THE COLLABORATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTION, INC.

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects is a nonprofit organization committed to learning practical lessons about the reduction of poverty and conflict. The following is a link to CDA's website:
www.cdainc.com/

USAID TECHNICAL OFFICES

OFFICE OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION

The Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (DCHA/CMM) provides analytical and operational tools and technical assistance to USAID Overseas Missions, development officers and program partners to enable the Agency to better address the causes and consequences of

conflict. The following is a link to DCHA/CMM's website:
www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/conflict/

OFFICE OF DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

The Office of Democracy and Governance (DCHA/DG) is tasked with supporting and advancing USAID's Democracy and Governance programming worldwide. The DCHA/DG offices helps USAID field missions design and implement democracy strategies, provides technical and intellectual leadership in the field of democracy development, and manages some USAID programs directly. For more information about DCHA/ DG's work, visit:
www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/

OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVES

The Office of Transition Initiatives (DCHA/OTI) helps advance peace and democracy in conflict-prone countries through fast, flexible, short-term assistance in response to rapidly changing conditions on the ground. DCHA/OTI's website provides information about its programs:
www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/

URBAN PROGRAMS TEAM

The Urban Programs Team (EGAT/PR/UP) works across sectors to increase economic prosperity, democracy and security by helping cities to promote and manage urban growth and serve the poor. See the Making Cities Work website for more information:
www.makingcitieswork.org

U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenure, NW
Washington, DC 20523
Tel: (202) 712-0000
Fax: (202) 216-3524
www.usaid.gov